NOTES

Upon the

Lord Bishop of *Salisbury*'s

Four late DISCOURSES

To the *CLERGY* of his Diocess.

PARTICULARLY

Upon the *Last*, relating to the DISSENTERS.

In a *LETTER* to a Friend.

Right Prelating is busie Labouring, and not Lording,
Bishop *Latimer*'s Sermon of the Plough.

Wherefore lift up your Heads, Brethren, and look about with your Eyes, spye what things are to be Reformed in the Church of England! Is it so hard, is it so great a matter for you to see many Abuses in the Clergy, many in the Layety?
His Sermon before the Convocation.

LONDON,

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ERRATA.

Page 1. line 2. blot out *the*, p. 7. l. 17. for *acted upon* read *acted by*, p. 32. l. 7. in ſome of the ſheets the words *in metre* ſhould be put in after *pſalms*.

NOTES, &c.

SIR,

I Thank you for Obliging me with the ſight of my *Lord Sarum's* four late *Diſcourſes* to the the Clergy of his Dioceſs, the laſt of which your ſelf muſt needs own the *worſt tim'd*, and the *worſt linkt* of any thing in the World.

For what reaſon his *Lordſhip* was pleas'd to reflect upon the *Diſſenters* as *Separatiſts* at this time of day, when by Act of Parliament they enjoy (tho' not *Equal Advantages*) an *Equal Eſtabliſhment* with his *own Conſtitution*, I will not pretend to determine : Nor perhaps can he himſelf give any better Account of his tacking a Diſcourſe againſt them to the reſt, than that the ſame *Spirit of Contention* which his Lordſhip hath before now diſcover'd, had in that Moment an Unconquerable Aſcendancy over him.

His *Lordſhip*, it muſt be confeſs'd, writes with one ſingular Advantage which the poor *Noncons* muſt never expect, he hath the Civil Government for his Security, and free Liberty to vent whatever he pleaſes; tho' 'tis true, *He* muſt have a care how he *Miſrepreſents* the *Foundations* of our *Government*, his frequent remembring a Vote of *Parliament*, and Mr. *Johnſon's* moſt ingenious *Notes* on a *Paſtoral Letter*, with what the *Common Hangman* was once employ'd about in his *Lordſhips Service*, will be of admirable Uſe to him in this Caſe. But in Spiritual Matters he may e'en talk all that is in his Heart, and whatever elſe he finds agreeable to his Intereſt; for being himſelf a *Spiritual Lord*, one of the *ſix and twenty* Lights of the Nation, and a chief among the *Guides* of the *Church*, he may hold himſelf ſafe from any Contradiction, eſpecially *Now* he knows the Preſs is entirely at the devotion of his own Party, and they muſt very much expoſe themſelves who would get in but *one Word* againſt a *whole Volume* of his *Lordſhips*: Tho' methinks an *Eccleſiaſtical Peer* of all others ſhould be of too generous

a Temper, either to call the more Names because he wears a Protection, or to take any Advantage against his *Brother of lower degree*, that mildly jogging him by his *Lawn Sleeves*, may happen to tell him, *An't please you, my Good Lord, in this thing I humbly conceive you were not a little overseen.*

A great *Champion* it must be confess'd the *Prelatical Church* hath in this *Salisbury Bishop*, and no doubt both *He* and the *Cause* he pleads will flourish Eternally, if the Greatness of their Circumstances can but deter all others, as it doth their *own Underlings*, from questioning their *Pastoral Oracles.*

What success *Our Prelate* will have against his other Antagonists, I will not Divine, but the *Dissenters* (I make no question) will hold themselves oblig'd to him for the *Episcopal Confirmation* which his weak Management of his own hath given to *their Cause*, to the Goodness of which this must be imputed, unless this *Right Reverend Author* hath incurr'd the same Unhappy Fate from which the *great Livy* himself was not wholly exempt, that the *Last part of his Works should be a sufficient Disgrace to all the rest.*

 These

These *four Discourses* coming out together in *a body*, afford us a Notable Specimen of his *Lordships* Abilities; but the Learned World hath been long acquainted with his many Productions, and hath already given them an Universal Applause; yet I am apt to believe they have not at any time seen a more pregnant Instance of his *Cunning* and Dexterity than appears in his uniting these last Compositions into one Volume, where most *Invidiously*, and with a strange kind of Impartiality the *Atheist* leads the Van, and the *Dissenter* brings up the Rear.

It will be no just Cause of Offence (I hope) to this *Noble Prelate* or his Party, if in our own Vindication we take the Liberty to requite his Lordships Kindness with a few just and serious Reflections on each Subject of his several Discourses; and I shall choose *Sir* to begin with that against the *Atheists!*

First Discourse against *Atheism.*

First then let us Enquire, What is it hath given the greatest Occasion to the *Rise* and *Progress* of *Atheism* in the *English* Nation? Is it not that Men have made Religion, and the Sacred Function of the Ministry, truckle

to

to the Gratification of their *Lusts*, especially their *Avarice*, *Pride* and *Sensuality*? But a few will be Convinced that there is any solid Foundation for that Belief, which they see made use of to such vile and sinister Ends! Many are mistaken, if the extravagant Grandeur of *Prelates*, and other Church *Dignitaries*, hath not exceedingly contributed to diffuse this horrible Contagion.

It would make a Man sick to hear *our Prelate* declaim against the Poverty of the *Inferior Clergy*, as a *Crying Grievance*, *and a Scorn put upon the Gospel*, when those that enjoy some *Thousands* a Year (among whom I do not say his Lordship is one) shall yet behold their Poor Brethren who *Minister in Spiritual things, so slenderly supply'd in Temporals, that nothing but extream Necessity can induce them to serve in such Cures, who are put to wrestle still with the same Necessity, especially if they have Families that grow upon them.* Preface, p. 11. Preface, p. 11

Nor is it less ridiculous, and Criminal in *our Prelate*, to tantalize them with Hopes of Relief by New Methods, whilst the *true Cause* and *Remedy* are so *obvious*, and yet so much

slighted

slighted, and in effect *renounced*. Our *Law-makers* (I am of Opinion) will be so kind, to try how far a *more equal partition of the Ecclesiastical Revenue* will go towards the supply of the *poor Clergy*, before they lay any more Burdens upon the People on that account.

There will be no want of *Atheists* so long as *Churchmen* are thus desperately enamour'd of *Great Benefices*, and so *Careless* of their Cures; while they heap one Steeple upon another 'till their Heads grow giddy, and they can scarce look low enough to Converse with their Inferior Brethren.

They may Preach up Humility and Mortification long enough in their *cold*, *formal*, *florid* Discourses, before they perswade one *Atheist* that themselves are convinc'd of its Necessity, while they *Vye* in *Fullness* and *Gaiety* not with the *Gentry* only, but with the *Nobility* too.

How should *Atheism* but thrive in a Land, where Men can *Declare*, and *Swear*, and *Preach*, ay, and *print Dialogues* too, for such a kind of Loyalty, as when they are try'd they perfectly *leave in the lurch*, to be redeemed by those that

Vide Dr. *Burnets* Dialogues

that can find in their Hearts to submit to a *suffering State*, which they might avoid at the same *Easie* but *Unconscionable* rate as these Men do.

It cannot but be a mighty strengthening to the *Atheistical* Party, that some Men who Preach up Piety, will not endure the strict exemplary Practise of it, no not in others, whether of their own or a different Communion, much less in themselves, but make it the subject of *scorn* and *ridicule* when they are out of the Pulpit.

Nor doth it want a share in this *malignant influence*, that there are so many *prints* and *footsteps* yet visible, of those more than *Heathenish Barbarities* which have been all along acted by one sort of *Christians* upon their *Protestant Dissenting Brethren*.

From all this it is undeniably evident, that the *Faith*, *Humility* and *Self-denyal* of the *Nonconformists*, in parting with their *Livings*, and casting themselves entirely upon *Providence*, their stedfastness in refusing the *Oaths* and *Subscriptions* by them judg'd *unlawful*, their *Sobriety*, and endeavouring to *practice* what they have

have *preacht* to others, hath been a *ſtanding* (not to ſay the *only*) *Witneſs* to this Generation, *That there is a GOD*, and that the Convictions of his *Being* and *Government* lye at the bottom of ſome Mens Actions.

Second Diſcourſe againſt *Socinians*.

Secondly, Concerning his Diſcourſe againſt the *Socinians*, give us leave to obſerve what have been the fruits of the *Church-mens* overvaluing the *Rational* way of Preaching, as if all Points were capable of being comprehended, and explained by it to a demonſtration: It had been better in this reſpect, if our *Rational Divines* had contented themſelves in many Caſes with the direct affirmations of the *Scriptures*, and paid ſome more deference to the ſimple act of believing them; for whilſt every thing muſt be brought down to our *Reaſon*, and levell'd to our Capacities, they have conjur'd up the *Evil Spirit* of *Socinianiſm*, which will exerciſe all their Skill to get down again.

Witneſs oppoſing the Bill of Excluſion.

It hath been the conſtant way of this *Church* to let in the worſt of Evils upon the Nation, (as in the late Reigns *Popery*, and *Socinianiſm* now in this) and when they have made

made themſelves and others abundance of Labour, and grievouſly expos'd the Nation, then if they have helped never ſo little to extinguiſh the Fire, which but for themſelves had never flam'd out, nor conſum'd ſo many *worthy Patriots*, to ſet up their Creſts, and loudly to proclaim their own Atchievments, and that too when their Victories are not ſo compleat, nor the Enemy's Defeat ſo abſolute as they themſelves do repreſent. E. of *Eſſex*, Ld. *Ruſſel*, Col. *Sydney*, &c.

And here, Sir, by the way, I hope you will not forget to enquire in what Communion *Atheiſts* and *Socinians* do moſt abound: And further, I wiſh all to be caution'd againſt *Arminianiſm* by the prevalency of *Socinian* Errors; for thoſe who magnifie the Power of Man's Will, and thoſe that exalt his Underſtanding beyond the meaſures of Truth and Sobriety, are not very far diſtant from each other.

Thirdly, As for *Popery*, we are ſorry to ſee the *Church of England* ſo much *ſymbolizing* with it, and ſo hard put to it to defend its ſelf upon its own bottom; our concern on this account will appear very juſt, by making uſe of the Inſtance before us: Here is a renown'd *Prelatical Biſhop* diſcourſing vehemently againſt Third Diſcourſe againſt Papiſts.

 Infallibility,

Infallibility, and at the ſame time pleading with Might and Main for the *power* of the *Church*, in impoſing *ſymbolical Ceremonies*; but can any thing be more abſurd, than that Men who confeſs themſelves *fallible*, and prove it too both by Word and Deed, to the ſatisfaction of all the World, ſhould obtrude their Sentiments and *Compoſures* (Forſooth) as if they were as Infallible as his Holineſs at *Rome* pretends to be, or our *bleſſed Saviour* and his *Apoſtles* really were? And is not this done to the height of Arrogance, whilſt all that will be *benefic'd* among them, are forced *indiſpenſably* "To Declare, Aſſent and Conſent, to all and "every thing contain'd and preſcrib'd in and "by the Book of Common Prayer: And all that have refus'd to comply with their *Modes* (how much ſoever againſt their Conſciences) have been Proſecuted with the utmoſt Severity! How laudable and conſiſtent, when compar'd with our *Prelatical Platform*, is the Popiſh way of firſt aſſerting the *Infallibility* of the *Church*, and then erecting a Court of *Inquiſition* to defend it?

How will *this*, or ony other *Prelate*, be able to overthrow our *Popiſh* Adverſary's Arguments

ments for *Salt*, *Oyl* and *Spittle*, when their *Ceremonies* ſtand upon the very ſame Foundation? and *will* they *nill* they, our *Church-men* ſhall be conſtrain'd to admit them, whenſoever their *Good Lords* and *Maſters* ſhall think fit to follow the *Romiſh Prelates* in the Impoſition of them.

The Truth on't is, when the *Proteſtant Prelates* have to do with the *Papiſts*, they are forced to the *Diſſenters* Arguments againſt themſelves, by magnifying the *ſufficiency* of the *Scripture Rule*; but when the ſame Men encounter the *Diſſenters*, becauſe the Scripture-ſufficiency is but an *unpromiſing Topick*, and ſure enough to fail them, they ſhift Hands, and wield the ſame Weapon againſt us, which they will by no means allow the *Papiſt*, (*viz*, The Power of the Church) this is no very good ſign of a good and defenſible Cauſe; but who can blame the *Patrons* of it, that attends to the Straits and Neceſſitys to which they are ſometime reduced, not excepting the *Biſhop* of *Sarum himſelf!* *Vide* p. 286, 287.

And thus by degrees have we trac'd *our Prelate* down to his fourth Diſcourſe, wherein he is pleas'd to charge the *Diſſenters* with the Fourth Diſcourſe againſt Diſſenters.

Guilt of a *needleſs* Separation, we hope preſently to make it appear that his *Lordſhip* is Guilty of a much more *needleſs* Clamour; but that we may the better diſcover the unreaſonableneſs of that whole Party, which raiſes ſuch a duſt about *Separation*, and how unjuſtly they *appropriate* to themſelves the Title of the *Church* of *England*, we ſhall in few words attempt an impartial ſtating of this Caſe.

The *Church of England* is a thred-bare term, that may ſignifie many things of a very different Nature, which therefore ought not to be huddl'd up under one Name, without ſome little Explication; and ſince *our Author* hath not thought it at all advantageous to his Cauſe to give us any, for your clearer inſight into the preſent Controverſie you may pleaſe, *Sir*, to take the following juſt diſtinctions.

Firſt, The *Church* of *England* may very properly ſignifie that part of the *Catholick Church* of *Chriſt* which is reſident in *England*.

In this Senſe the *Church* of *England* is neither one Sect of Chriſtians nor another among us, but every Man that hath given up himſelf to *God* in *Chriſt* by *Baptiſm*, or hath been warrantably devoted by others in his Infancy, and leads

a *Christian* Life, is truly a Member of it: From the *Church* of *England* in this sense, we neither do nor can separate, but upon such Grounds as would Separate us from the *Body* of *Christ*.

The only *Separatist* here then is *He* that is *No Christian*, and any one with half an Eye may see to whose share the greatest part of *Separatists* of *this sort* will fall.

Secondly, The *Church* of *England* may signifie the *Christians* of *England*, as form'd into distinct Societies for the Worship of *God*, and presential Communion with each other therein.

Now that the *Dissenters* are form'd into such worshipping Bodies, and consequently not of this sort of *Separatists*, is more visible then many would have it, and therefore 'tis undeniable they are a part of the *Church* of *England* in this Sense also.

The *Separatist* here then is *he only*, that though he professeth *Christianity*, doth not ordinarily worship *God* publickly, or with an Assembly united to that End, and of this sort of *Separatists* the *Loose Devotees* of the *Titular Church* of *England* are all that we know.

Thirdly, The *Church* of *England* may signifie the Christian Congregations of *England* as united

united under the ſame Civil Government, and ſubmitting to it; and the *Separatiſts* from the *Church* of *England* in this ſenſe are chiefly the *Jacobites*, the generality of whom are ſo far from belonging to the *Diſſenters*, that they arrogate to themſelves the ſole Honour of being the *True Sons* of the *Church* of *England*.

Yet here indeed it muſt be confeſs'd, that though the *Diſſenters* have approv'd themſelves the faſteſt Friends to the Civil Government, they are really ſeparated from ſome very Conſiderable Advantages, which it hath thought fit to beſtow upon the *prelatical* Party; for, whereas the *Diſſenting* Miniſters and People enjoy no more than the bare Protection of the Civil Magiſtrate in their Religious Worſhip, from the Rage of *malignant* Perſecutors, the *Prelatiſts* have a *very conſiderable part* of the profit of the Land aſſign'd them by Law, for the Maintenance of their Miniſtry, vaſtly exceeding in proportion what is left to the poor *Layity*: The *Clergy having a Tenth of the profits of the Land, though 'tis probable they are not one Man to a thouſand.*

All the *Separation* then that can be found under this Head, among the *Diſſenting Clergy*, is

is, a Separation from *Tithes* and *Maintenance*, from *Archbishopricks* and *Bishopricks*, from *Deaneries*, and *Archdeaconeries*, from *Prebends* and *Parsonages*, from *Masterships* and *Fellowships*, and from other such fat Benefices.

Our Layity too are chargeable with a Separation of this very kind, they being separated from all *Civil* and *Military* Offices, whether those of *Justices* or *Mayors*, *Sheriffs* or *Recorders*, *Generals* or *Admirals*, *Colonels* or *Captains*, or whatever other *honourable* or *profitable* Posts can be thought upon: The *Sacramental Test* having secured all such places to the Members of a distinct Communion.

This *Separation* we doubt not but the *Conformists* (though they are never like to be guilty of it themselves) will have the Charity to pardon to us, because it redounds so very much to their own Advantage.

Fourthly, The *Church* of *England* may signifie the Christian Congregations of *England*, thus united under one civil Government, as agreeing or disagreeing with each other in *Doctrine*, *Church Goverment*, or *Worship*; for there can be no Separation (but that which is local and unavoidable to all) farther than they differ in some one of these. And

Doctrine

And here, Sir, you muſt own (1.) As to *Doctrine*, that the *diſſenting Miniſters* by their Subſcriptions plainly ſhew there is *no Separation* on their part; and indeed, thoſe that are acquainted with the *preaching* and *writing* on both ſides, will eaſily judge who keep cloſeſt to the doctrinal Articles.

The *Separatiſts* from the *Church* of *England* then in *this ſenſe* are on the one hand the *Socinians* and *Arminians*, by *what Names or Titles ſoever dignifi'd* or *diſtinguiſht*, and on the other hand the poor deluded *Quakers*, and ſuch like *Enthuſiaſts*.

Church Government.

(2.) In the Buſineſs of *Church Government* the *Diſſenters* are not aſham'd to own a *Separation*, rather do they think they ſhould have great Cauſe to be aſham'd of *themſelves*, and their *Churches*, if *herein* they *ſeparated* not from *the prelatical* Party.

The *Diſſenters* ſay there's a great deal of Reaſon, why the power of *Governing* a *Church* ſhould be veſted in the *ſame perſon* that hath and exerciſeth the power of *Teaching*, and *adminiſtring* the *Sacraments* therein; and who can this be but its *proper Paſtor*? who beſt knowing the *Diſeaſes* of the People, is therefore moſt fit

fit to apply the *Remedy*: The *power* of the *Keys* is certainly *eſſential* to the *Office* of a *Goſpel Miniſter*, and whoever ordains him to that Office, muſt *of neceſſity inveſt* him therewith; and though he ſhould *expreſs* a contrary Intention, either that Act or the *whole Ordination* muſt be a *Nullity*.

Every *Miniſter* of *Jeſus Chriſt* hath Authority from him to *govern* no leſs than to *teach*, but through the Influence of the *Ceremonious Party*, the Laws of the Land have debarr'd the *Paſtors* of ſingle Congregations in their own Communion from the Exerciſe of this Power, and have made them *miſerable Vaſſals* to the *Hierarchy*.

Here then our *Separation* is from the *Prelates* as *Creatures impos'd upon the Church, and ingroſſing to themſelves that power which belongs to the Paſtor of every Congregation*, and which 'tis *naturally impoſſible* duly to apply while it lodges in ſo few Hands.

And together with the *Prelates*, the *Diſſenters* acknowledge a *Separation* from *Lay-Chancellors*, *Officials*, *Surrogates*, *Proctors*, and the whole *Gang* of *Spiritual Court-men*, whom they look upon (as having no Authority from *Jeſus Chriſt* but)

but) as the *Spawn* of a *monstrous Prelacy*, and the most *intolerable Grievance* that the Nation this day groans under.

And as the *Dissenters* separate from the *subjects* of this *Church-Government* (the *Prelates*, *Lay-Chancellors*, &c.) so also do they own a *Separation* from the Exercise of it, as it proceeds from them, and is manag'd by them.

Themselves in the Preface to the *Commination* acknowledge their want of a *Godly Discipline*, and since they have *the Front* to own this *Defect*, and never had the *Grace* to reform it, in *all the time* that is run out since *Edward the* sixth's Reformation to *septimo Gulielmi tertij*, it would be no less then *High Treason* against *Jesus Christ*, the *head of the Church*, not to disown and *separate* so far at least from this *imperfect* Church as to supply this *want*, by a *godly Discipline* among our selves.

There is this *further Disorder* among them which will very much account for our *Separation*, that whereas they *distrust*, and *dishonour* the *Ordinance* of *Excommunication*, by putting all their *Confidence* in the *carnal* Sword, the *Dissenters* think the *Discipline* of *Christ sufficient* to its own End, without such a *Supplement* as quite

quite enervates the *Virtue*, and obſcures the *Luſtre* of it.

This *conſtrains* them to *ſeparate* from many of the *prelatical Canons*, particularly from thoſe wherein they *Excommunicate* Perſons for ſaying, "That "there is any thing in the Government of the "*Hierarchy*, or in their *Articles*, or in the Book "of the *Common Prayer* that is repugnant "to the Word of God: And *above all*, the *Diſſenters* hold themſelves *bound in Conſcience* to *abominate* that *Canon* which "*excommunicates* all thoſe "that ſhall ſay ſuch Aſſemblies as *theirs* are "true Churches. Vide 4, 5, 7. *Canons.* Vide 9, 10, 11, *Canons.*

(3.) As for what relates to *Worſhip*, let it be conſider'd, that the whole body of the *Diſſenters* Worſhip is either found among the *Church party*, or is generally own'd by them as lawful. Worſhip.

Free Prayer, Reading the Scriptures, and Expounding them, Praiſing God by ſinging of Pſalms, Celebrating the Sacraments according to *Chriſts* Inſtitution, with the *Geſture* which his *own Example* hath warranted, (in all which ways the *Generality* of the *Diſſenters* worſhip the *God* of their *Fathers*) are clearly unexceptionable.

As for the *Ceremonies* and the *new* Geſtures, and the *preſcrib'd Forms*, as they are ſtill uſed by the

prelatical Party, which are *the* things in this Worſhip from which we *ſeparate*, they are *at beſt* queſtionable, and certainly *very far* from being *eſſential* to *Goſpel* Worſhip.

The *ſumme* of what hath been ſaid on this head is this,

In *Doctrine* there is *no Separation* at all on the *Diſſenters* part, rather are they the *trueſt ſticklers* for the *doctrinal* Articles.

In *Church Government* they are *ſo far* from *Separating* from the true *Scriptural Epiſcopacy*, that in defence of it, they diſclaim that *Dioceſian Prelacy* which is *inconſiſtent* with it, and hath *only* made uſe of its Name to deſtroy the *thing*: 'Tis (in a word) no more but a *noxious anteſcriptural prelacy* from which the *Diſſenters* ſeparate, together with the *pernicious Rabble* of its *eccleſiaſtical* Dependants, (and if we'll take their *own* Words for it,) there is nothing among them that deſerves the *Name* or bears the *Face* of true *Chriſtian Diſcipline*.

In *Worſhip* our Separation is not from the *Object*, or *Medium*, or *Matter*, or *End*, which are *profeſſedly* the ſame in both Parties: We worſhip the ſame *God*, through the ſame *Mediator*, in the ſame *Evangelical Duties*, in order

der to the ſame *great End* (the *Glory of God*; and our *own Salvation*) we *ſeparate only from certain dubious or ſinful Forms and Ceremonies, of humane deviſing and impoſing.*

So that *here* they cannot with the leaſt *Truth* or *Modeſty accuſe* us of any *Separation*, ſeeing our *worſhip* is the very ſame with theirs, unleſs they are diſpoſed to ſpeak *improperly*, and will mean by their Worſhip the *Ceremonies* that *clogg* it, which *upon Occaſion* they themſelves have *diſcarded* from being *any parts* of their *Worſhip*.

This *mighty Separation* (the *Noiſe* of which hath for ſo many years fill'd the *Pulpits*, and which the *Prelate* of *Salsbury* is ſo fond of *buzzing* afreſh into his *Clergies* Ears) being thus *dwindl'd* into a *Separation* from *nothing in the World* but from *humane Forms*, from certain devis'd *Rites* and *Modes* of *no value*, from *uſurpation* and *Church-Tyranny*, give me leave, Sir, to enquire how the *cauſe of the Separation* (as our *Prelate* phraſes it) does reflect upon the *Prelatiſts* themſelves.

And *Firſt*, They are the *Authors* of that *Separation*, be it *more* or *leſs*, which they *condemn* in us, it is moſt notorious that themſelves both *began* and *continue* it, and *theirs* it muſt be more than *ours*, *becauſe it is not in our power* to change our Sentiments *Vide* Troubles of *Franckfort*.

ments about the *things impos'd*, but it is evidently in *their* Power to forbear the impoſing of them, which they may well afford to do, as being (according to their own Confeſſion) no matters of *Neceſſity* or *good Importance*.

We do not deſire to *raviſh* their *Ceremonies* &c. from them, (not we truly, e'en let thoſe that are fond of 'em keep 'em all to themſelves, with all our Hearts,) we only wiſh to enjoy our own *Chriſtian Liberty*, either in joynt local Communion with them, or in *diſtinct Aſſemblies*, according to our preſent Poſture, without being *perſecuted* as the *vileſt* of Men, or (if ſuch a Favour could be granted) without being *ſcandalized* with the *odious* and *unjuſt* Titles of *Schiſmatichs* or *Separatiſts* by any *Engliſh* or *Scotch Prelatiſts*, whenever the Teſty fit takes 'em.

Secondly, They are Guilty of a *Separation* peculiar to themſelves, of a very *high Nature*, and of a *Miſchievous Tendency*: Some are ſo ſteel'd with *Helliſh Impudence* as to deny *Our Miniſtry* and *Sacraments*; and *others* there are who refuſe to join with us *Occaſionally*, when it might be done without ſlighting their own Church Order. If any be ſo *wiſe* and *charita-*

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ble to desire the Liberty of Testifying their Agreement with the *Dissenters* in all that is of absolute Necessity to Salvation, by joining with them Occasionally in their *publick Worship*, 'tis great Odds but he loseth their Favour as much as if he *quite* relinquisht their *Party*; such *irreconcileable* Enemies are some Men to *Union*, while they would be thought the great Promoters of it: Certainly the Union of which *These* are ambitious is *plainly*, that *all Men*, yea, even the *Ark of God its self* should bow to the *Dagons* of their own setting up.

Thirdly, The *Prelatists* are full of *Schisms* and *Separations* among themselves: Let them *never* boast either of their *Unity* or *Uniformity*, unless instead of all their *Jarring Discords* there were a more *Harmonious Consent* in their own *Worship*.

And here, *Sir*, I shall take the Liberty of diverting you with *two* or *three* Instances of their *Good Agreement*, which are *the more remarkable*, as being *peculiar* to the *prelatical* Constitution, and which therefore cannot be *recriminated* upon the *Dissenters*, in Defence of whose *minuter* Differences it may be said, that they are the less to be *Condemn'd*, for that they were

were never *impos'd* as *absolutely necessary*, nor have the *Dissenters* ever had the *Impudence* to pretend to that *Unity* and *Uniformity* which *these men* make so much their *Boast*, with what *Reason* or *Justice* let the *following Instances* of their *own particular Dissentions* determine.

Some *bow* at the Name of *Jesus*, while others of the *same Communion* pay *no more* Reverence to *that* than to the Name of *Christ*.

Some bow to the *East* or *Altar*, (which you will,) while *others* that would be thought as *good Church-men*, condemn that Practice as *superstitious*.

Some use the *Lords Prayer kneeling*, others pay *no more respect* to that than to any *other* Prayers.

Some are very clamorous in their Responds, others there are more modest, and a less noisy sort still content themselves with an *Amen* only at the End.

Some only *say* over their *Prayers*, while a more merry sort *sing* them out; nay, there are not wanting some *Jovial Sparks*, that *Cant* out their very *Creed*.

Some *preach* in the *Surplice*, while most *pull it over their own Ears* before they go into the Pulpit.

Some

Some *make Prayers* in the Pulpit after the *Liturgy*'s over, others are only *pray wee's*, that *bid* Prayer.

Some read the Service *in the Desk*, while others go with *a part* of it to the *Communion-Table*.

The *Communion Table* in ſome *Churches* is *rail'd about*, in many 'tis e'en left as *open* as any other part of the *Church*.

In ſome *Topping Churches* you ſhall ſee *huge unlighted Candles*, (for what uſe no Body alive can tell, but) the *meaner Churches* are forc'd to *ſhift without* them.

Some are for a *Conſort of Muſick*, others only for *Organs*, ſome *diſlike both*, and others can *get neither*.

And here, *Sir*, by the way, 'tis worth your while to *obſerve*, that among the *Diſſenters*, the *poor* and *rich* Congregations, the *larger* and the *leſſer*, worſhip *God* in the ſame *innocent unceremonious* manner; whereas in the *prelatical Church* the *rich Congregations* worſhip with abundance of *Pomp*, while the *Poverty* of *others* obliges them to a *like ſimplicity* with the *Diſſenters*.

So that a *Church* of *England Courtier* is *one* ſort of a Worſhipper, a *C.* of *E. Cathedraliſt* of *another* kind,

a C. of *E. Citizen* yet *less theatrical*, and a C. of *E. Peasant* of a sort *by himself*.

In a word, this *Diversity* of Worship is so *very considerable*, and makes these *pretended Uniformity* Men look so *little* like Members of *one* and the *same* Church, that I am very confident, a *perfect stranger* to them all, at *one time* visiting the *Royal Chappel* at high Devotion, and *by* and *by* looking into *Westminster-Abbey*, and *anon* tracing to St. *Lawrence*'s in the *City*, and *shortly after* travelling to some *homely Countrey Church*, and strictly observing all their *various ways* of Worshipping, would be ready to swear, that *these men* never had an *Act* of *Uniformity* read among 'em, but were each of them a much more *distinct* sort of Worshippers, and *less of a piece* than the *Dissenters* are with the last mention'd, and *honestest* sort among themselves.

From all this we may naturally infer, that either *the several Formalities* instanc'd in, which are so much *magnifi'd* by one Party, and *neglected* by another of the *same Communion*, do appertain to the *prelatical Church*, or they do not; if *they do*, those *separate* from it that *use them not*, if they *do not belong* to it, those are *Separatists*

tiſts that *uſe* them; this however is *certain*, "as "they differ *more* or *leſs* in theſe things, ſo far "they *ſeparate* each from other.

If the *Church Guides* have only *recommended* theſe things without *enjoining* them, and have left them to be *obſerv'd* or *omitted*, as beſt agrees with the Judgments and Conſciences of others: Why might not the *ſame Courſe* be taken with all the other *Ceremonies*? Why is not the *Geſture* at the *Supper*, why is not the *Croſs* in *Baptiſm*, why are not the *Surplice* and other Veſtments, and *many things of the like nature*, left in their *own Indifferency*, to be *embrac'd* or *rejected* as every one is determin'd in his own Mind?

If ſo *conſiderable* a *Diverſity* may *conſiſt* with *Uniformity*, and is *actually* found in the *prelatical Church*, why might not this be allow'd, in Order to ſo great a Benefit to the *Church*, as the *Union* of the *two great parties* would be?

But beſides, what hath been already ſaid of their *Diſcord*, I dare be ſo bold to affirm, that abundance who ordinarily join in *local Communion* with the *Prelatiſts*, do *mentally* and *really ſeparate* more from them than many others of a *diſtinct* Communion.

So do all those, both *Ministers* and *People*, that *pervert* the *doctrinal Articles*, and hold Opinions *inconsistent* with the most *natural* and *genuine* meaning of them.

They are in the *same* Predicament who lead a Vicious Course of Life; for, as the *former* have *separated* from the *Truth* which the *Church* doth profess, so have *these* from *that Purity* which it declares *necessary* to Salvation.

A *Dissenter* that is *sound* in all the *Articles* of *Faith*, and orders his Conversation *accordingly*, is incomparably more of the *Church* of *England* than the most *exquisite Formalist*, that hath learnt all his *Gates* and his *Postures*, but is neither *sound* in his *Head* nor in his *Heart*.

The one *separates* only from some little particularities that are against his Conscience, and the other from that which is *vital* and *essential* both to a *Christian* and a *Church*, and which his *own Conscience*, and the *Scripture*, and the *Consent* of *all Christians* urge upon him as *indispensably* necessary.

Nay, so *Obnoxious* is the *Prelatical Church* on the account of *Separation*, that great Numbers of those who join with them, have as *mean* an *Opinion* of their *Ceremonies*, and in their *Judgments*

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and *Affections* ſeparate as much from them as the *Diſſenters*, having *nothing* that engages 'em to an Obſervation of them, but a *bare Eſtabliſhment* by the *Civil Magiſtrate*, whoſe *Authority* in this Caſe has been *rejected* by many *very great Men*: But a *legal Eſtabliſhment* is a formal Word that *enchants* abundance, and it's enough for theſe that ſomewhere or other they have met with ſome word that gives 'em a little Liberty in their *own Minds* to *communicate* with the *Church*: And whilſt with very hard ſhifts *this ſort of Church-men* have made themſelves judge it *barely lawful* to abide in that *Communion*, they are *loth to leave the Sun-ſide of the Bank*; little thinking in the mean time, that to join with a *Church* leſs *pure* and ~~*edifying*~~, when a *better* may be had, (tho' with Reproach) is to prefer *carnal policy* before *chriſtian Wiſdom*, *Pollution* to *Purity* and *Peace with men* to *Peace with God* and *our Souls ſalvation*.

But leſt it ſhould be *objected*, that *theſe* are but *Trimmers*, or *half Church-men* at beſt, let me obſerve to you, Sir, that on the *other hand* there are very many who have the *Honour* to be of the *high Church* (as they themſelves phraſe it) who do yet very ſubſtantially *ſeparate* from the *main body*.

Among

Among these we will first rank the *Jacobites*, who have private *Assemblies* and *Ministers* (if not *Prelates*) of their own, and who perhaps can be content to wave the *Consecration* of places, as the *Dissenters* have done before them: Matters are now come to that pass even among *high Church-men themselves*, that the voice is *lo here is the Church* in one mans mouth! and *lo there* in anothers! in the Judgment of these *Churchmen* the far *greater number* of the *prelatical Church* have deserted its Principles, and have lost the great *Characteristick* of a true *Church of England Man*, (*viz.*) "Passive "Obedience Loyalty to a *jure divino* Succession; upon which *verry account* it is, that the *abdicated Prelate* of *Bath* and *Wells* hath scatter'd *his Pastoral Letters* "against holding Communion "with that part of the Church which have "taken the Oaths to the present Government. 'Twould do well if his *Brother* of *Sarum* and he cou'd concert this affair, at least we desire that *our Prelate* (befor he addresses any more *discourses* against the *Dissenters*) would free *himself* and his *party* from that Guilt of a *sinful separation* which the *Jacobite Sons of the Church* are daily reflecting upon them.

But

But beſides theſe *high Church Separatiſts*, there are not wanting a conſiderable Number of another ſort, who would willingly *exclude* ſome of *thoſe Offices* which themſelves and their Congregations *ſtatedly perform*: How glad would many of *this ſtrain* be to have *conceiv'd Prayer* before Sermon, and *ſinging of Pſalms* totally *ſuppreſs'd*? but they know well enough, ſhould not *theſe* be parts of their *Service*, great Numbers would ſoon *deſert* 'em: Tho' how they can reconcile *this kind* of Prayer, and Singing, with "their own *ſolemn* Promiſe to uſe the *Liturgy*, "and *no other Form*, I leave to their own Conſciences to determine!

Nay, it is *further conſiderable*, that *where* they are agreed to *practiſe* alike, 'tis upon ſuch very *different* Principles, and *ſo deſtructive* of each other, that from hence 'tis notoriouſly evident, *how powerful a worldly Intereſt is to make contrary Principles* ſweetly conſpire to its own ſupport.

Let the *ſeveral oppoſite Principles* upon which the *Hierarchy* is built be our Inſtance, the poor *ſimple* vulgar, and many of a better ſort that would be thought *Champions* for the *Church*, take it for granted, that *all* the *Learned Men* on their

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ſide do *firmly believe our Engliſh Epiſcopacy to be Jure Divino*, and in this they think them moſt unanimous: But (alaſs!) they little imagine how *very differently* and *inconſiſtently* ſometimes their *great Doctors*, and thoſe that wear *Lawn Sleeves* all at once, ſhall argue in its defence.

Give me leave, *Sir*, to name *two* or *three* ſeveral Opinions on this very Head:

Dr. *Hammond* &c.

(1.) SOME *Church-men* tell us, that *a Biſhop and a Presbiter were all one in the Scripture-times, and that the Biſhops afterwards made the* Diſtinct *order of Presbiters or Prieſts, as they are now call'd.*

This (I humbly conceive) you will ſay was a *great piece* of Boldneſs, and certainly it can be call'd no leſs, for *any Men* to make a *New ſubordinate Office in the Church* without *Authority* from the *Great Biſhop of our Souls*, the Lord JESUS CHRIST.

(2.) OTHERS of the *ſame Church*, (and thoſe the moſt before *Laud*'s time,) us'd to ſay, that *by Divine Inſtitution there were no Biſhops over Presbiters, but Prebiters to avoid Diviſions ſet up one among themſelves above the reſt, and gave him the Title of Biſhop, by way of eminency.*

But this ſort of *Epiſcopacy* is a little *too low* and *mean* for our *modern Prelates* to content themſelves with.

(3.) MANY

(3.) MANY of this *high Church* think that *Dioceſan Epiſcopacy is jure divino*, and *that an uninterrupted Succeſſion of ſuch Biſhops is abſolutely neceſſary to the being of a Church, and to the Validity of every Miniſters Ordination*: TO theſe I might add, *no ſmall names* among them who *differ* from their *Brethren* in this, that *they would have the Univerſal Church govern'd by a Colledge of Biſhops* (*by Letters Miſſive or in Council*) *and the Pope as prime Patriarch to be the* Principium Unitatis. Are not theſe very *hopeful Churchmen* think you? and don't they put us in the ready way to *Catholick* Unity? *Roman Catholick* I mean? Mr. *Dodwell*, &c. Bps. *Gunning*, *Bramhal*, &c.

(4.) THERE are yet OTHERS of this *very Church* who think *that there is not any particular form of Church-government of divine Inſtitution, but that in the Communion or Subordination of Churches we can only follow the general Rules of Scripture, and the common Principles that belong to the Conſervation of Societies.* This Sort of all others contributes moſt effectually to the *deſtruction* of that *common conceit*, that our *Dioceſan Epiſcopacy is of divine Right*: And of theſe ſome aſcribe *more* to the *power* of *Magiſtrates* in this point, and ſome *more* to the *Agreement* of *Churches* among themſelves: Dr. *Stillingfleet*, &c.

Yet all theſe *muſt* and *do* ſubſcribe (but

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God knows how!) to one and the *same* Position, *that it is evident to all that have diligently read the Scriptures, and the Antient Fathers, that Bishops, Priests, and Deacons have been three distinct Offices, ever since the Apostles Times.*

I would to God the whole *Levitical Tribe* of this *divided Communion*, would seriously lay to heart this one thing.

But *at present* I leave *our Prelate* any *further Trouble* of this kind, and the rather because I am confident by this time you are *fully convinc'd*, and will with me readily conclude, That this *goodly Church* of *England*, (which notwithstanding all its Boasts of *Unity* and *Uniformity*, do's next to the *Popish*, abound with the most *Schisms* and *Separations* of any in the world) is the *least qualify'd*, and has the *poorest Title* of any that ever *pretended* to be the *Standard*, and *Center* of *Union* to all other *Churches* whatsoever.

And in *this Faith* I subscribe myself

SIR,

Yours, &c.

FINIS.